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the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN[®]



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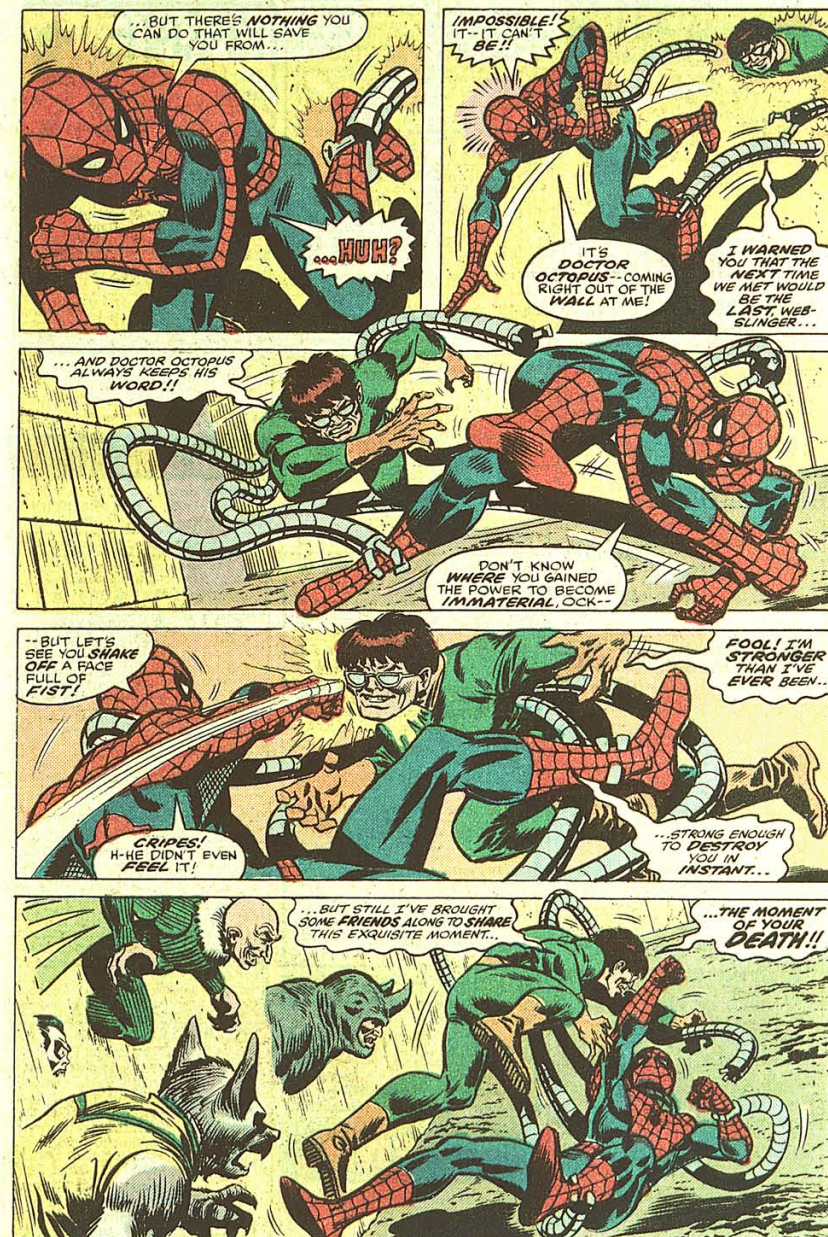
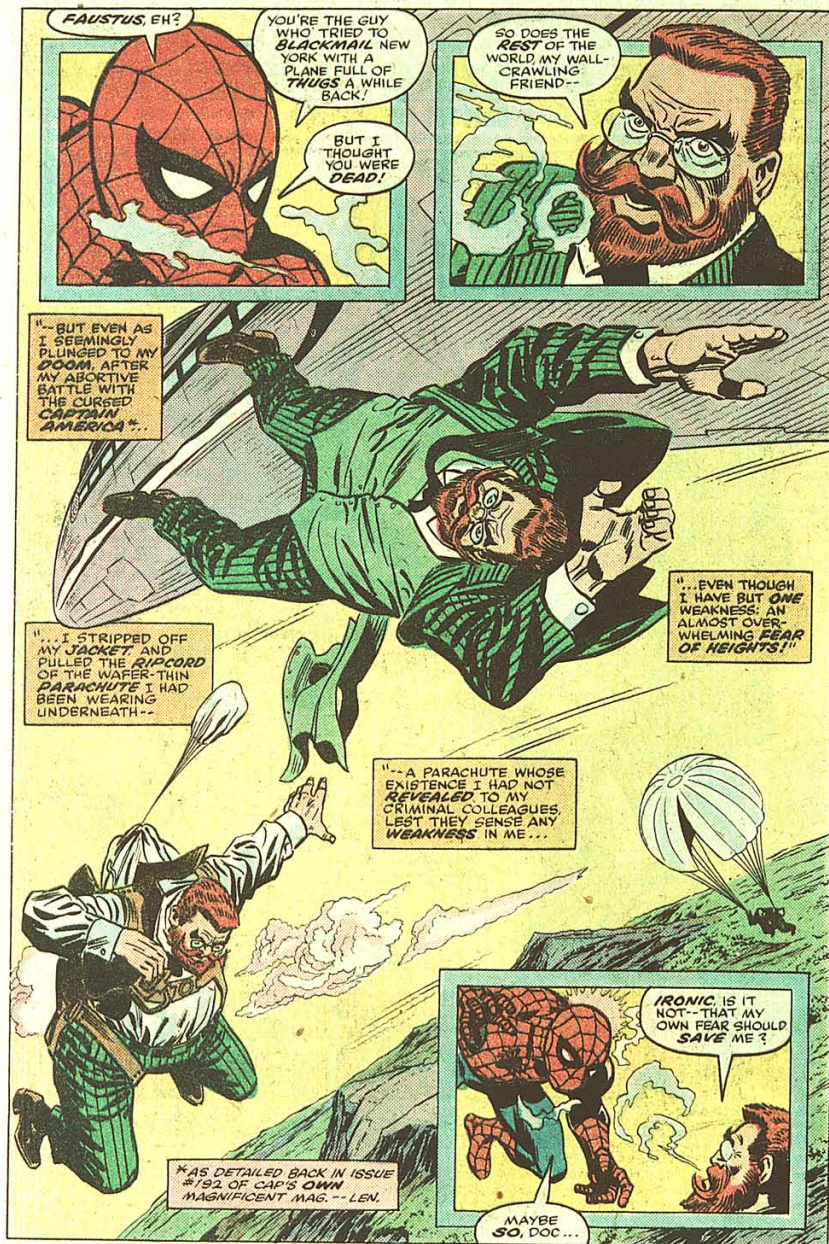
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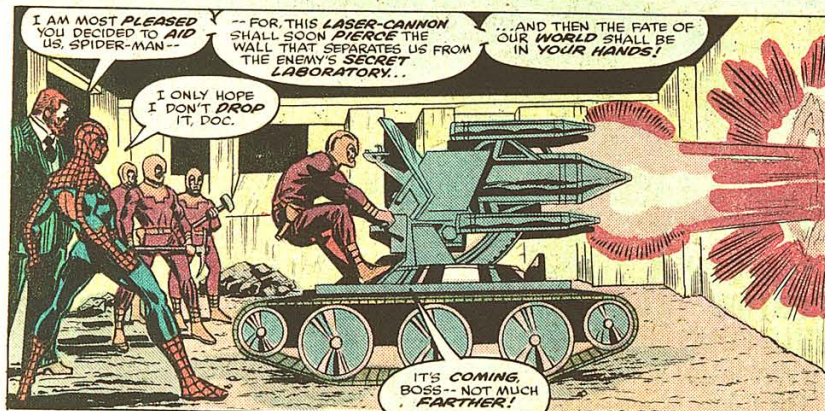
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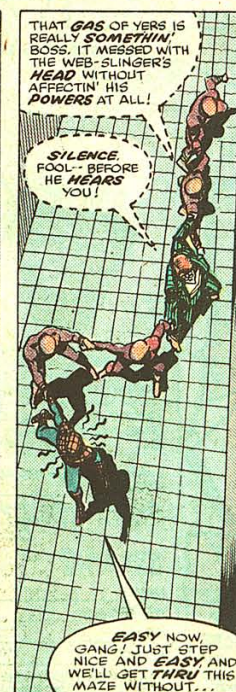
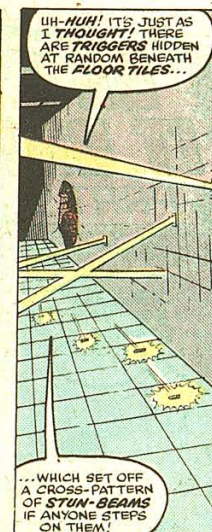
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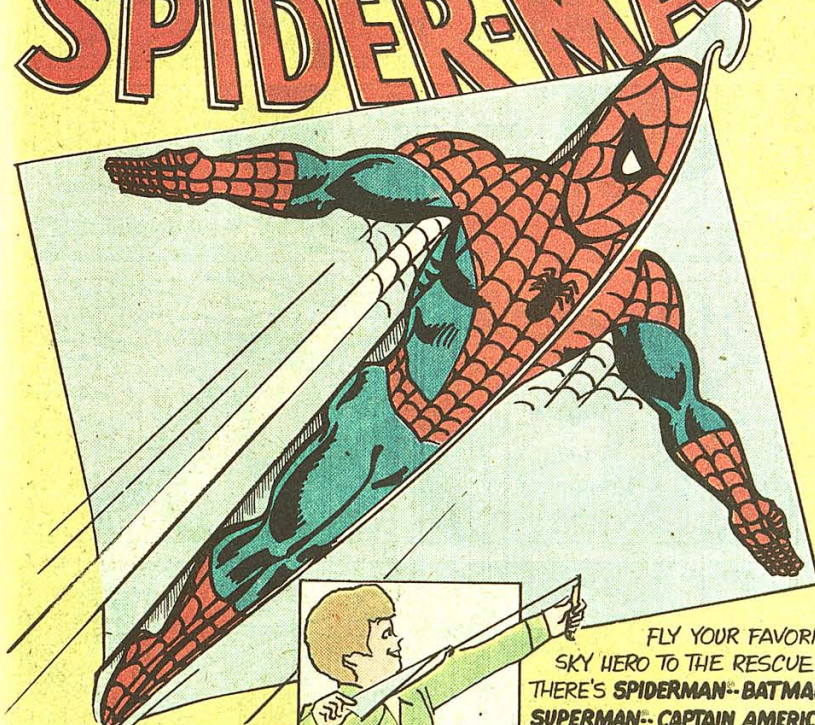
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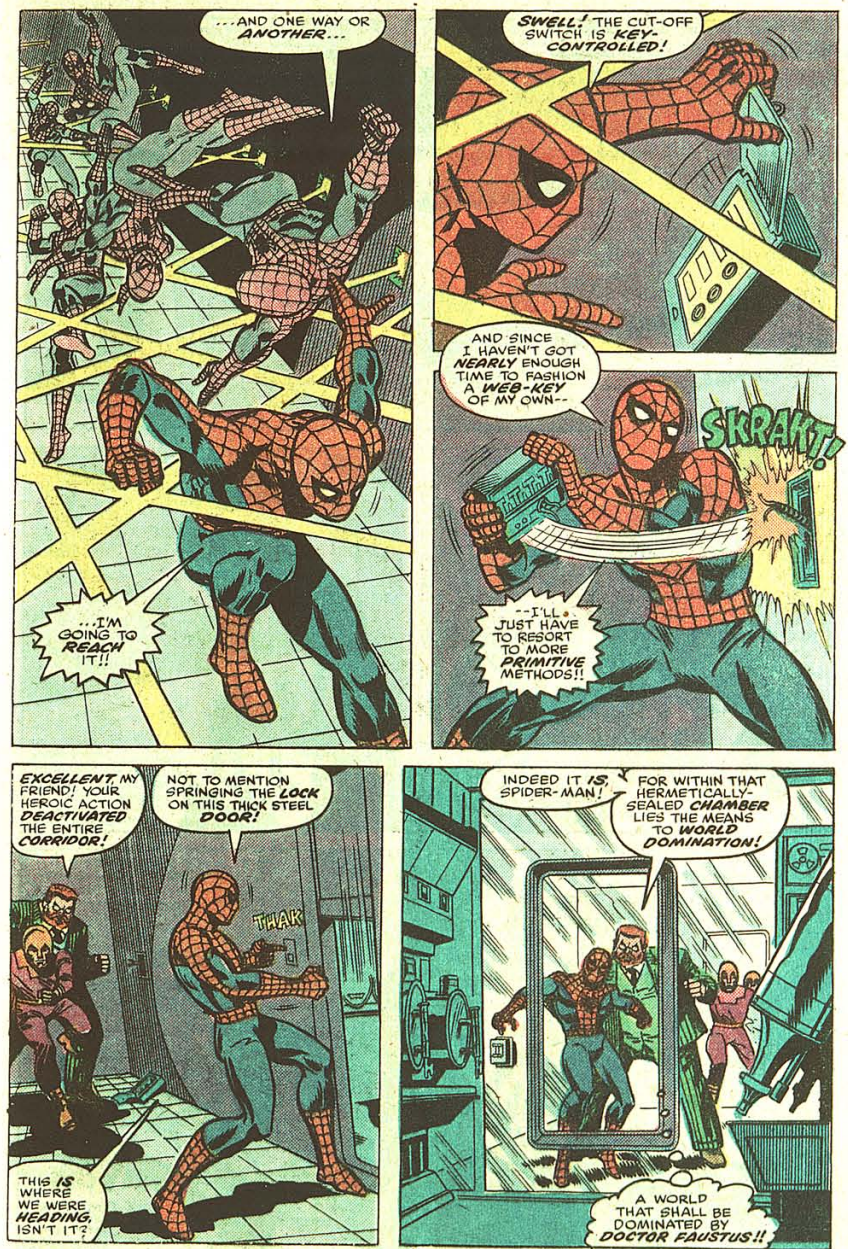
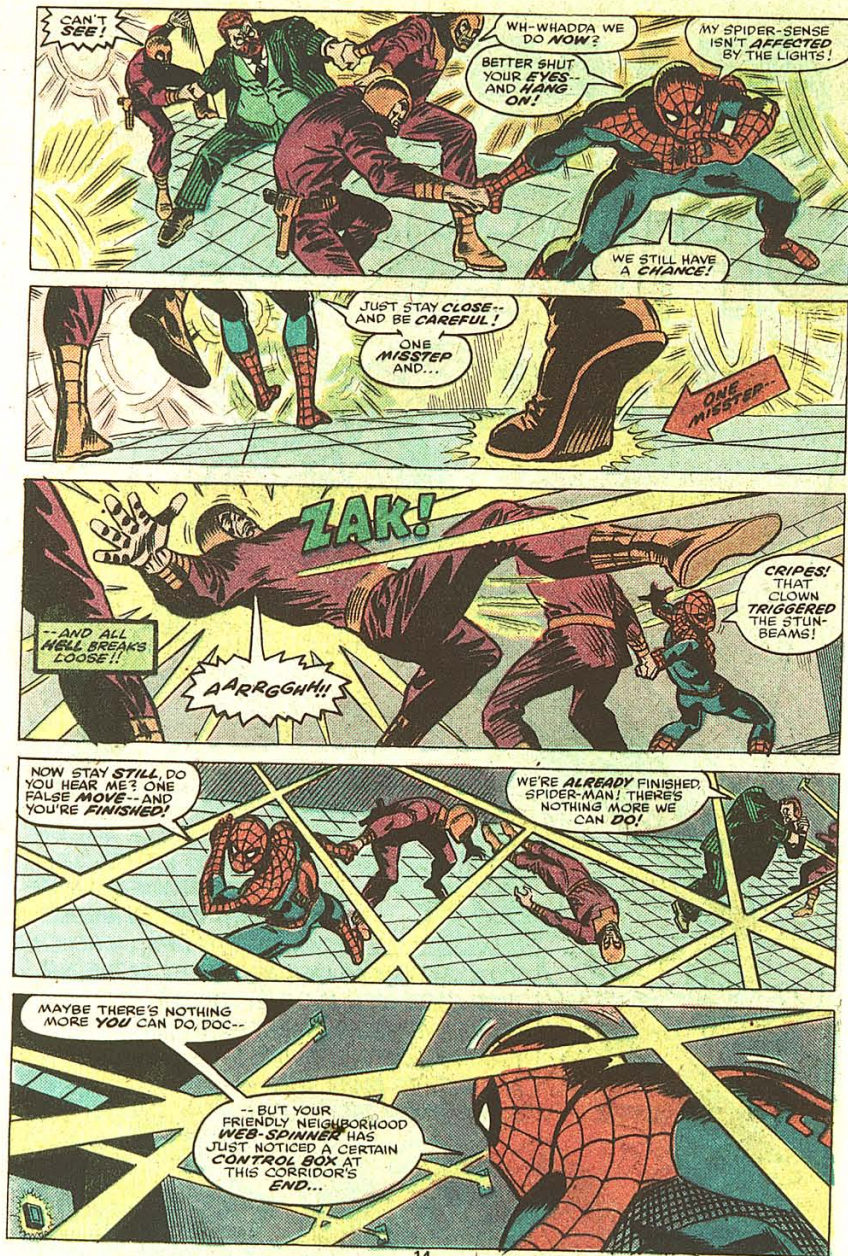
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AND ON THAT NOTE, WE TAKE LEAVE OF THE ENTHRALLED WEB-SLINGER FOR THE MOMENT--AND TURN OUR ATTENTION TO A RESIDENTIAL AREA OF FOREST HILLS...



THIS IS THE HOUSE, SIR. I'M CERTAIN IT'S JUST WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR.

UH-HUH.

I HATE TO USE THE CLICHÉ-- BUT A LITTLE OLD LADY AND HER FAMILY USED TO LIVE HERE. PARKER. I THINK THEIR NAME WAS.

AFTER THE PARKER WOMAN'S HUSBAND DIED, THIS PLACE WAS JUST TOO LARGE FOR HER--SO SHE AND HER NEPHEW FINALLY MOVED OUT.

SHE STILL OWNS THE HOUSE, BUT SHE'S EMPLOYED MY AGENCY TO RENT IT. PROVIDES HER WITH A LITTLE PENSION, YOU UNDERSTAND.

UH-HUH.



I'LL TAKE IT.

OF COURSE THE BEST FEATURE OF THIS HOUSE IS ITS... EH? WHAT DID YOU SAY, SIR?

I SAID I'LL TAKE IT.

WELL--AH--IF YOU INSIST, SIR.



BELIEVE ME, SIR, YOU'VE MADE A VERY WISE CHOICE. THIS HOUSE WILL BRING YOU A GREAT DEAL OF JOY.

YEAH...I KNOW.

LOOK, WHY DON'T YOU GO ON AHEAD. I WANNA LOOK OVER THE--ER-- NEIGHBORHOOD.



THE JERK! HE DIDN'T HAVE TO TWIST MY ARM TO TAKE THIS JOINT!

I'D HAVE PAID HIM TEN TIMES THE RENT HE ASKED FOR IF IT HAD COME TO IT!



I SWORE I'D RETURN TO YOU SOMEDAY, YOU BROKEN-DOWN OLD FIRETRAP--

--AND THIS TIME I'M NOT LEAVING TILL THE SECRET YOU POSSESS IS MINE!!



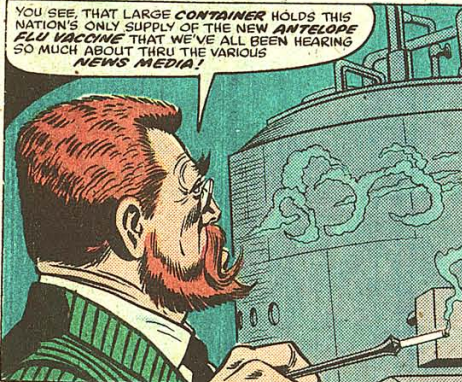
WHO WAS THAT SINISTER HOUSE-HUNTER YOU ASK, FAITHFUL ONE? GOOD QUESTION!

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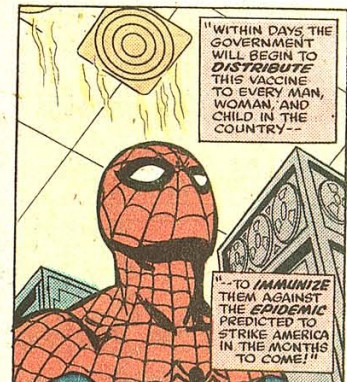
MAN, I CAN'T TELL WHICH END A THIS NUTHOUSE IS UP, BOSS.

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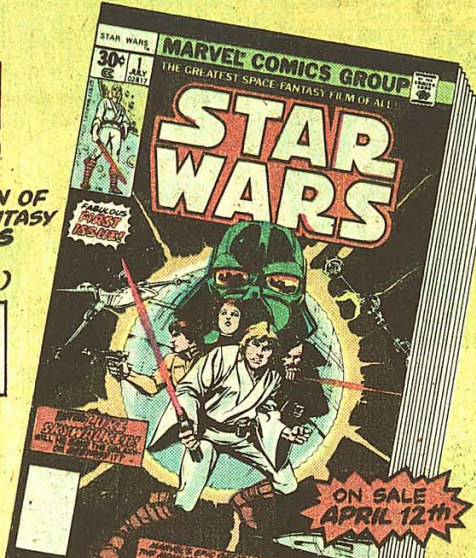
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THE SPIDER'S WEB

Dear Marvel,

Anything that might've been wrong with SPIDER-MAN #166 was more than compensated for by the warm, touching "Happy Holidays" ending. This type of homey, compassionate fare—which was once quite common in comics—has been absent for some time, and it was good to get another glimpse of it.

Of course, Len Wein's approach to "War of the Reptile Men" had cinched a favorable reaction from this observer long before that wonderful final-page family scene. Where he might easily have worked the story from the standpoint of the villains, or even Stegion alone, he chose to go about it in a manner capzulsized on pages six and seven. Spider-Man, encountering a heartsick Mrs. Connors, promises her he'll rescue her son and return Dr. Connors to normal. His resolve dominates the rest of the tale; his determination to keep his word to this poor woman becomes more important than the actual defeat of Stegion, the way the chase became more important than the crime in *The French Connection*. The result of all this was a hero whose motivations could be more carefully examined and clearly understood than those of many other Marvel characters. And, isn't that a great deal of what SPIDER-MAN's always been about?

I'm thrilled to learn that Harry Osborn and Liz Allen are going to get married. Even if Peter Parker's gonna be in college for the next 75 years, at least somebody in the supporting cast is moving forward. My only request, and I don't really care if I'm the only one asking for this, is that Harry *not* resort to being the Green Goblin moments before the ceremony is to begin.

Edward B. Via
1648 Dean Road
Roanoke, VA 24018

Actually, Ed, we like to think that all our covorin' characters keep moving forward to one degree or another, Peter Parker included—and we've got plans along those lines that will be developing over the next few months that are certain to knock Marvel-dom Assembled out of its collective tree.

Dear Marvel,

There's only one way to describe issue #166 of AMAZING SPIDER-MAN—great! I've been reading SPIDER-MAN now for three-and-a-half years, and this is certainly one of the most entertaining stories yet. With the Lizard and Stegion on the loose in New York, with jolly J. Jonah Jameson and the equally masterful-Marla Madison plotting our hero's death, with Harry Osborn and Liz Allen deciding to tie the knot, and with the overall excellence of the issue, I would say that this was a MARVELOUS Christmas present. But why didn't our hero's spider-sense tingle when he walked by Stegion in the park?

Joe Keenan, Jr.
(No address given)

Truth to tell, Joe, when Lively Len Wein and Rip-roarin' Ross Andru plotted that particular tale, they were taking the definition of the Web-slinger's spider-sense quite literally; specifically, that it warns him only of imminent danger.

Since, as succeeding panels so obviously displayed, Stegion was on his last legs, his strength completely exhausted when Spidey walked past him, our hero wasn't really in danger—was he? Thus, no spine-chilling spider-sense tingle!

Dear Reptile-Men,

Issue #166 was the single best SPIDER-MAN story to hit the stands in years! The writing and the art were far beyond their normal levels. It was downright exciting!

And, Len, lately I think you have been in a rut with old villains and plot complications in SPIDER-MAN. But this time, even though you used two old bad guys, you did it in a fresh and dynamic manner. One specific comment: I really must applaud you for being one of the few writers I can ever recall who remembers the fact that lizards, being cold-blooded, don't operate so well in cold weather.

Raymond Slaten
2059 Krameria
Denver, CO 80207

Coincidentally enough, Ray, that precise point has become somewhat of a bone of contention around your batty Bullpen. Since the publication of a book called "The Hot-blooded Dinosaurs", two rather opinionated camps have sprung up here.

One camp—led by Handy Andy Yanchus, captain of our coloring department, and Dynamic Dave Cockrum, X-MEN illustrator extraordinaire—insist that lizards, dinosaurs among them, were warm-blooded, while traditionalists Lively Len Wein and company maintain that dinosaurs and their ilk were cold-blooded.

And since it was the Lively One who plotted and scripted that particular tale, guess which version was used?

Gee, ain't these behind-the-scenes exposés fascinating?

Dear Marvel,

You made a mistake in AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #166, page 26, panels 1 and 2. In panel 1, the tyrannosaurus hit the police car and knocked the two police officers down. Then, in panel 2, while Spidey was still in the air, he said that "those two cops are still breathing!" The question is: How could he tell they were still breathing? The way I see it, his spider-senses couldn't have told him, because they only warn him of immediate danger. You blew it!

Jeffrey Van Dusen
Route 2, Box B4
Newburg, MO 65550

Sorry, Jeff, but not this time. Y'see, it was really very simple for our hero to know those policemen were still breathing, seeing as how they were still *moving* as well. One of the drawbacks of the comic book biz is that it is basically a static medium despite the action-packed artwork we try to present to you.

Thus, while it was easy for the Web-head to tell those lawmen were still alive, though not necessarily kicking, it was a wee bit more difficult for us to show you how he knew.

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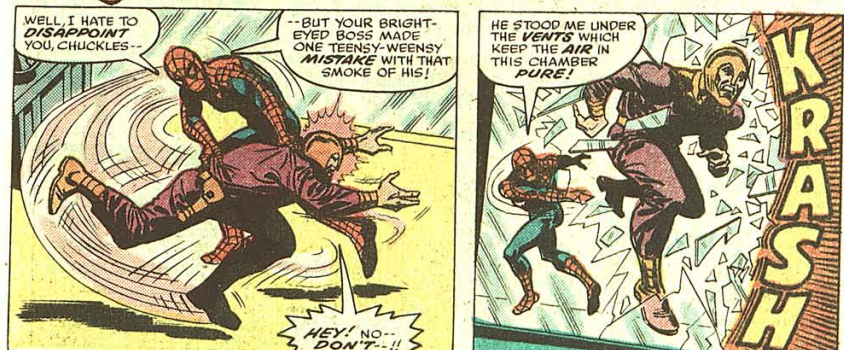
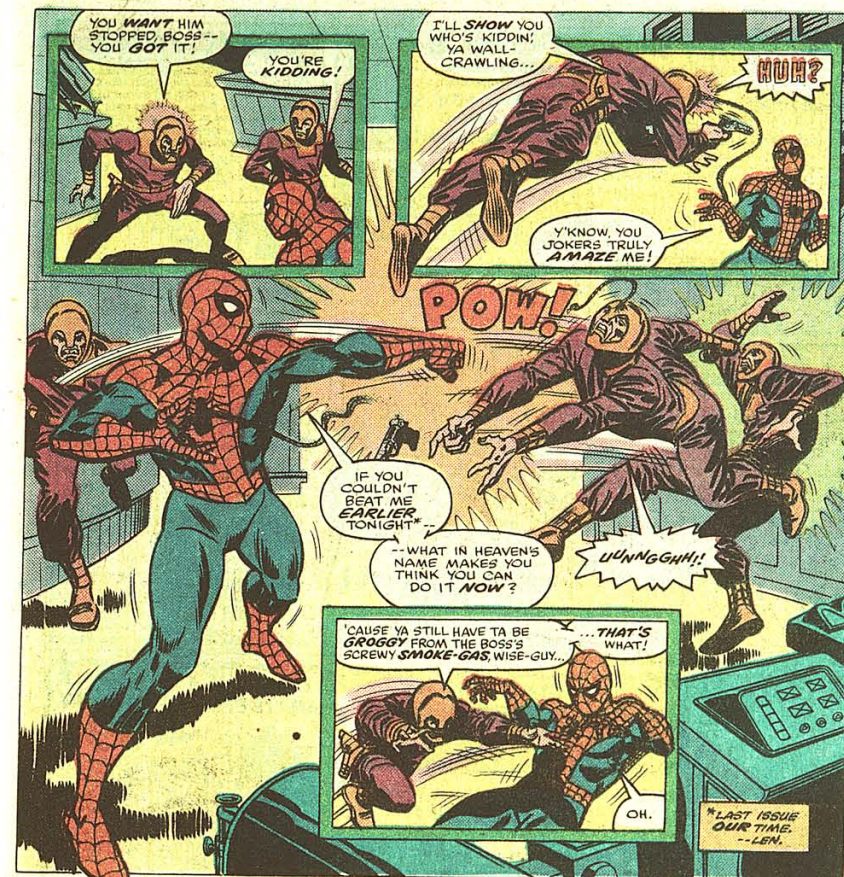
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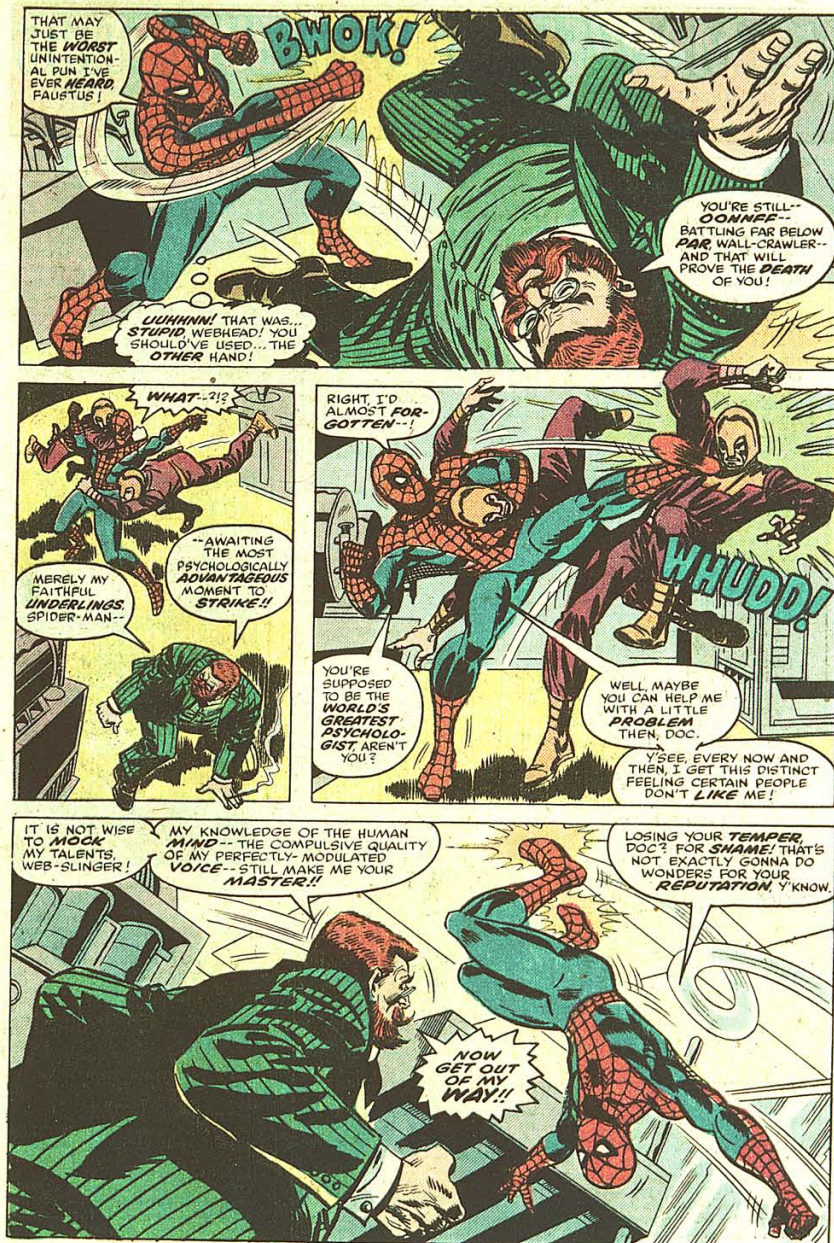
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Stan Lee
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STAN LEE'S SOAPBOX

Hey, gang—remember years ago when they started calling us "Marvel, the House of Ideas"? Remember how it was Marvel who brought you the first book-length continued stories—and the first real movie-type screen credits so that you'd get to know our writers, artists, letterers, colorists, and editors? Remember how we started the much-copied Bullpen Bulletins page—the ol' Soapbox column—and the nutty little footnotes throughout our mags? Remember how we created a whole new wave of super-heroes for you—from the great FANTASTIC FOUR, to HULK, and SPIDER-MAN, THOR, and all the others—as well as CONAN, America's first sword-and-sorcery smash hit—HOWARD THE DUCK, our answer to unbridled sanity—the best-selling Origins books, ORIGINS OF MARVEL COMICS, SON OF ORIGINS, BRING ON THE BAD GUYS, and the soon-to-be-published SUPER WOMEN—and all the other outrageously offbeat concoctions which warm the cockles of your grateful hearts! Okay, that's all. I just wanted to make sure you didn't forget! And now, more about one of our niftiest and nuttiest newbies coming your way—and this will really blow your mind! We told you a little bit about it a couple of issues back, but I'm bustin' to hit you with a few more teasers. I'm talkin', natch, about our great new KISS magazine—the one which features a book-length comic strip starring the indescribable rock group, Kiss—plus a whole kaboodle of super-heroes and villains calculated to boggle your beanie! And get this—it's a comic book, but it's a deluxe, full-size magazine as well! It'll set you back a buck-fifty—and it's the greatest bargain you'll get all year! Also—and this is the real glitzy part—it will launch the most unusual, most unbelievable stunt ever pulled off in any publication! And you won't have to take our word for it—it'll be in newspapers and on TV from coast to coast! So, stay tuned, Believer. The House of Ideas is zooming along, and—in the immortal words of Irving Forbush—"Nous verrons ce que nous verrons!"

Excelsior!

Stan

ITEM! To emphasize what Stan was saying in the Soapbox about the House of Ideas zooming along, let's kick off this column with a few words about another new title we're springing on you this month... STAR WARS! If that sounds familiar, it might be because we've plugged it a bit in the past, but a much better bet is that you've been hearing about the multi-million dollar, super-science-fiction film from Twentieth Century Fox upon which

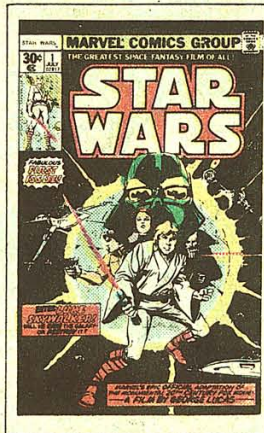
our comic is based. STAR WARS is an epic of the far-flung future where intergalactic war and intrigue run rampant. It was written and directed by GEORGE LUCAS, the man who gave us AMERICAN GRAFFITI and THX-1138, and features ALEC GUINNESS and PETER CUSHING, with MARK HAMILL as the interstellar saga's hero, LUKE SKYWALKER. With that kind of talent, you know this is going to be a big one. To do it justice in graphic story format, Mr. Lucas and company handpicked Marvel for the awesome adaptation task, singling out Rascally ROY THOMAS as writer/editor and Wholesome HOWARD CHAYKIN as artist. After the premiere issue, Surfer STEVE LEIALOHA will be joining the team as inker. To guarantee that the power and scope of the original film are preserved, the adaptation is going to be done in six parts, one issue per month. Don't miss any of them. We think it's going to be one of the most enthralling half-years you ever spent.

ITEM! Long before they became the accomplished comic book professionals they now are, Lively LEN WEIN and Marvelous MARV WOLFGAN were accomplished comic book fans. As such, they often collaborated on writing projects. Now, with NOVA #12 and AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #171, they're back at it again. Sorry if you see Marv plotted his Nova story as the first half of a crossover with Spidey. It's a murder mystery complete with six or so suspects and a masked super-villain who might be any of them! Just to keep things interesting for his old friend and fellow writer/editor, Marv refused to reveal the mystery's solution and instead left Len to figure it out as he wrote his Spider-Man section of the story. Did the Lively One come through? We'll find out next month when the two books go on sale. Pick up both of them and pit your deductive abilities against the devious plotting devices of Wolfman and Wein! And (as if you didn't know) no fair peeking at that last page!

ITEM! This month, the bullpen sheds a collective tear of farewell to Beaming BETH BLECKLEY, who's giving up the glitter and glamor of our editorial department for the hallowed halls of higher education as she goes back to college to complete her degree. Luckily, there's a gain to go with this loss, namely Beth's radiant replacement, Gentle JO DUFFY. Welcome aboard, Ms. D! And while we're handing out the welcomes, let's extend one to Memorable MARTHA CONWAY who recently joined us as secretary to none other than our smiling leader, ol' STAN THE MAN himself! Then, there's Jubilant JOHN ROMITA JR. who's given up freelance status to wield pencil, pen, and brush for us on staff, aiding an overworked Jumpin' JOHN TARTAGLIONE with the myriad art changes and corrections that pop up daily when you're putting out a passel of comic mags like we are. Glad to have you, Johnny. Now, about those 41 panels where the wings were left off Nighthawk's helmet...

ITEM! A few months ago, Stan made mention of the new hero we'd created especially for our British comics division... namely, CAPTAIN BRITAIN. He also said that we'd try to find a

way to give all you regular stateside readers a look at him as well, perhaps by reprinting some of his adventures. Well, merry Marvel, being the very soul of generosity, has decided to do something even better than that. Charismatic CHRIS CLAREMONT—who helped originate the Captain Britain character—is also resident scribe for MARVEL TEAM-UP, and he came up with the novel notion of using the good Captain as one of the guests Spidey (You all knew Spider-Man is in TEAM-UP, didn't you?) teams with. That tickled our fancy no end. So now, just as soon as the Charismatic One and ace artist Jocular JOHN BYRNE can write and draw the issue, you will be witness to the first full-fledged appearance in the colonies of the super-hero sensation of the British Isles. But, be warned! Captain Britain could make you want to give up Big Macs for fish and chips!



ITEM! Let's close with a preview of what will be going on in some of our big Summer Annuals (and if this seems too early, remember the first three of them go on sale in May). IRON MAN will be teaming with the CHAMPIONS, The AVENGERS will soar into outer space to join WARLOCK and CAPTAIN MARVEL in a death-duel with THANOS (and if you guessed from that past that a certain Stellar JIM STARLIN might be writing, drawing, and masterminding this epic, consider yourself an honorary Bullpennier), and HOWARD THE DUCK will share pages and billing with MAN-THING! Then there's a round-robin INVADERS saga in which Rascally ROY THOMAS has recruited many of the original Golden Age artists to draw new stories of the Invaders members whose adventures they handled back in comics' first era of super-heroes. As you can see, we're working hard to make all of this year's annuals the most unique and memorable ever! Don't disappoint us by missing any of them, hear?

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THE DRIED-UP FOOLS! I, "WATERMAN" WILL CONTROL ALL THIS WHEN IT TURNS TO RUST.

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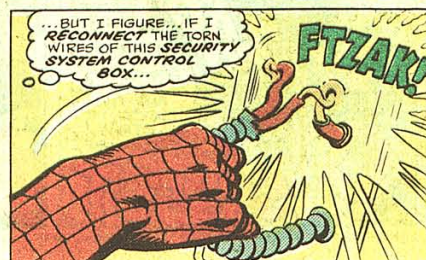
AND CREAMED FILLING!

WELL, THAT'S ALL WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE NOW, AND I CAN'T AFFORD TO GET RUSTY--SO I'LL KEEP MOVING.

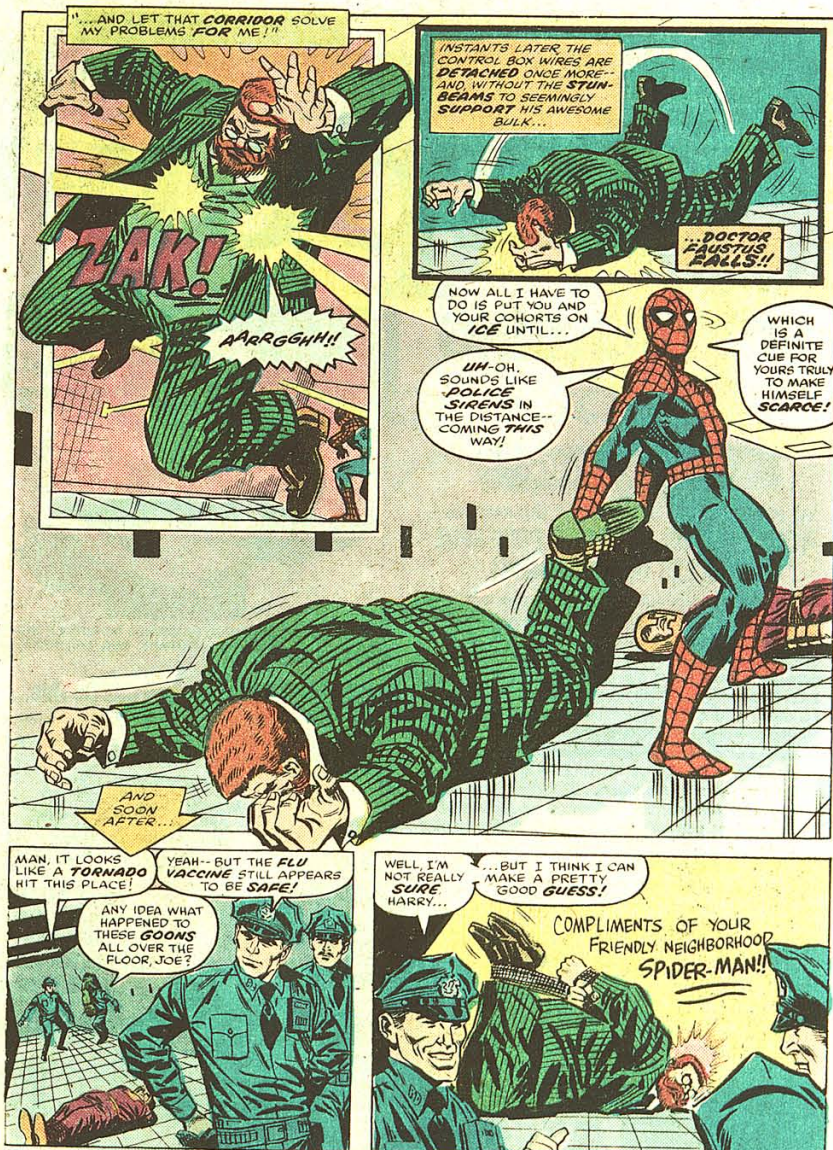
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IT BEGINS IN **NOVA #12** (ON SALE IN JUST A FEW WEEKS!) AS SPIDEY MEETS MARVEL'S NEWEST **SUPER-STAR**-- AND IT CONCLUDES **HERE** NEXT ISSUE AS WEB-HEAD AND BULLETHEAD TRY TO SOLVE THE MOST BAFELING MYSTERY OF ALL! REMEMBER, FIRST IT'S **NOVA #12**, AND THEN BACK HERE FOR...

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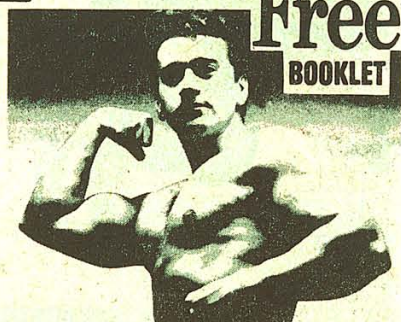
"In just 3 weeks I have gained 11" on my arms and 4" on my chest. I have also lost 4" off my waist. Your course is just great!" D. Roberts

"I was a skinny weakling when I enrolled, now I've gained 30 pounds in just 45 days. I am truly amazed, I'm going to be dynamite on the beach." B. Abbott

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"I have gained 20 pounds in just 30 days and I have gained over 6 inches on my chest. I find that my power has doubled. In sports I am a winner in everything I do." B. Daniels

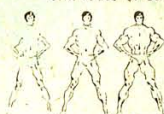
"I have gained 5" on my arms and 12" on my chest, while losing 3" off my waist. I have tripled my power and speed. Thanks for what you have done for me!" M. Robinson



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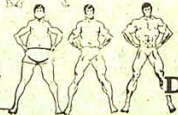
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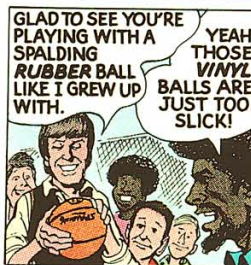
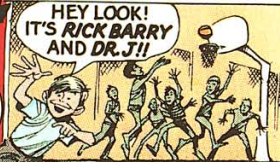
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PRESENTS

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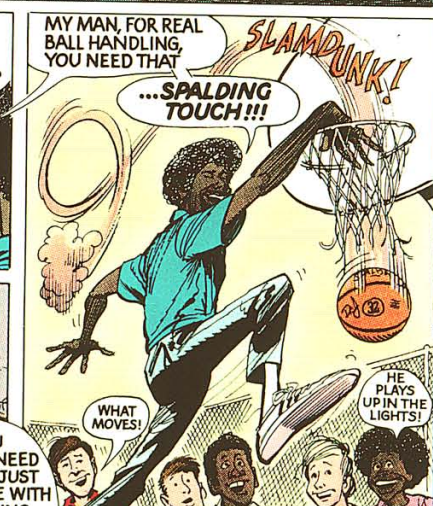
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